



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

**SAN FRANCISCO VA MEDICAL CENTER
PARKING AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE
STRUCTURE
PROJECT NO. 662-611**

Submitted to:
US Department of Veterans Affairs

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**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
PROPOSED PARKING AND EMERGENCY RESPONSE STRUCTURE
AT THE SAN FRANCISCO VETERANS AFFAIRS MEDICAL CENTER**

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) assessed the potential impacts of the various efforts of construction and operation associated with the proposed Parking and Emergency Response Structure (Proposed Action) at the San Francisco VA Medical Center (SFVAMC). An Environmental Assessment (EA) was prepared in accordance with the regulations set forth by the Council on Environmental Quality implementing the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (CEQ Regulations, Title 40 CFR 1500-1508); Executive Order 11514 as amended by Executive Order 11991; and VA Regulations - Environmental Effects of VA Actions (Title 38 CFR Part 26). The attached EA is incorporated by reference into this Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Description of Proposed Action and Alternatives

The VA is proposing construction and operation of a Parking and Emergency Response Structure (Proposed Action) at the SFVAMC that would provide additional parking spaces and would house various emergency response facilities. The project objective is to provide a structure that would provide 300 net new parking stalls and space for an Emergency Operations Center to support efforts in the event of a large emergency. Alternatives considered for this project and potential analysis in this EA included off-site parking with shuttle service, four functional design options, and a No Action alternative.

The off-site parking with shuttle service as an alternative to the parking structure was investigated by the VA, but was dismissed due to the lack of available parking areas of sufficient size. Because opportunities to share or lease additional parking spaces in the surrounding residential and business community were not found by the VA to be available, no off-site alternative was retained for detailed analysis in this EA.

There is limited space on-site for additional parking. Four functional design options were developed for the Parking and Emergency Response Structure, all located within Parking Lot J in the northwest corner of the SFVAMC campus. The first option consisted of a two-bay structure with the bays oriented in the east-west direction, similar to the bay orientation of the existing parking structure located adjacent to the south. This option was selected as Alternative 1 - Proposed Action for the following reasons: 1) it would produce the most efficient design in terms of square feet per parking space; 2) it would displace the least number of surface parking spaces in Lot J, thus resulting in more net new parking spaces than the other options; 3) it would provide the best opportunity to connect to the existing parking structure so that vehicles can more easily circulate between the two structures; and, 4) connections to existing access roads would be as good as or better than the other options.

A second option consisted of a four-bay structure, trapezoidal in shape, which covered essentially all of Parking Lot J. This option was retained for detailed analysis in the EA as Alternative 2 – Full Site Concept.

The third option developed was a variation of the first option, consisting of a two-bay structure, with the bays oriented diagonally across the site, parallel to Veterans Drive. This design option was not retained for detailed analysis in this EA due to its irregular orientation across the site.

The fourth option consisted of an “L” shaped configuration with the structure wrapped around the west end of the existing parking structure. During project design, it became apparent that this option invited complexity that was deemed by the design team and the VA to be insurmountable. The option had an extremely complex interaction with Veteran’s Drive and the existing garage, would require long closures of Veteran’s Drive with no alternate access possible, and would have an internal circulation that would drop efficiency significantly. This design option was not retained for detailed analysis in this EA.

The No Action Alternative would be to not construct or operate a Parking and Emergency Response Structure. This option was retained for detailed analysis as Alternative 3 – No Action.

Summary of Environmental Consequences

Analysis indicates the Proposed Action would not result in short-term or long-term impacts to the following resources: community services, economic activity, real property, resident population, and environmental justice.

The Proposed Action would have minimal to moderate impacts on aesthetics, air quality, coastal zone/floodplains/wetlands/watersheds/rivers/lakes, cultural resources, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, land use, noise, public controversy, public safety and solid/hazardous waste, transportation and parking, utilities, and vegetation and wildlife. No severe impacts were identified.

Construction activity will generate short-term impacts from temporary increases in noise, construction pollutant emissions, including dust, and temporary increases in traffic and loss of parking. Construction activities also have the potential to cause short-term impacts from storm water pollution, safety hazards to the public, impacts from vegetation removal, and temporary effects on visual quality. Mitigative actions included in the EA minimize these potential adverse effects, as well as potential impacts from seismic and geologic hazards and archaeological resources.

Furthermore, the Proposed Action would result in no adverse cumulative impacts to any environmental resource area. Although there would be a potentially adverse cumulative impact on the species of regional concern when considering all past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions in the area, the potential impacts of the Proposed Action would not contribute to


the potential impacts, and would not be cumulatively considerable, provided that the mitigative actions identified in this EA are implemented and adhered to. Thus, all cumulative impacts would be considered insignificant. .

Public Review


Per the request of interested parties, the EA was circulated for an extended 64-day public comment period running from January 31 to April 4, 2011. A Notice of Availability for the EA was published in the San Francisco Chronicle on five consecutive days from January 31 through February 4, 2011. Hard copies of the EA were mailed directly to interested organizations and government agencies, as well as to the State Clearinghouse for distribution to State agencies. Copies were made available at the SFVAMC Engineering front desk; the EA was also made available on the SFVAMC website. Four comment letters were received during the review period, as well as one from the State Clearing house after the close of the review period. Although not required under NEPA, all comment letters received responses. The attached final EA has been revised as necessary to address the comments.

Decision

As a result of the analysis of impacts of the Proposed Action contained in the EA, it is the VA's conclusion that, with the incorporation of appropriate construction practices, compliance with regulatory requirements, and implementation of mitigative actions, as described in the final EA, the Proposed Action would not have a significant environmental impact; therefore an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.



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Date

Attachment: Environmental Assessment